

## Journey Through Hallowed Ground

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### BACKGROUND

- \$ *National Heritage Areas:* National Heritage Areas (NHAs) are places designated by the United States Congress where natural, cultural, historic, and recreational resources combine to form a cohesive, nationally distinctive landscape. NHAs are intended to encourage residents, government agencies, non-profit groups, and private partners to collaboratively plan and implement programs and projects to recognize, preserve, and celebrate many of America's defining landscapes. The National Heritage Areas Program is administered by the National Park Service. There are currently 37 National Heritage Areas.
- \$ *The Journey Through Hallowed Ground National Heritage Area Act:* This legislation seeks to designate the corridor between Gettysburg, PA and Charlottesville, VA, generally following Route 15 (the Old Carolina Road) but also looping out to include Harper's Ferry, WV and other areas, as a National Heritage Area. (See Map)
- \$ *Natural, Cultural, Historic, and Recreational Resources:* Within the proposed area, there are numerous sites of importance, including one World Heritage Site, eight presidential homes, thirteen national park units, fourteen national historic landmarks, 60 historic districts, dozens of main street communities, and the largest collection of Civil War and Revolutionary War battlefields in the Country.
- \$ *Role of the National Park Service:* The Park Service's role is to provide advice and assistance to the designated Management Entity for the Heritage Area (in this case, the non-profit Journey Through Hallowed Ground Partnership). Through a cooperative agreement, the Park Service will provide its expertise in historic preservation, interpretation, and natural resource conservation. The Park Service also serves as the legal vehicle for any funds to be distributed to the Management Entity.
- \$ *Private Property Concerns:* In the past, concern for private property rights has been raised regarding Heritage Area designation. However, a GAO report on the subject (No. GAO-04-593T) has found that National Heritage Areas do not affect property rights. Furthermore, our legislation includes language clearly stating that the Management Authority is not a federal entity and can not invoke eminent domain, and that it can not use funds to acquire property.
- \$ *Absence of National Heritage Area Framework Legislation:* Because legislation establishing a framework for the designation of National Heritage Areas has yet to be enacted by Congress, the Park Service has implemented interim criteria to help determine if an area should qualify as a NHA. The Park Service has acknowledged that The Journey Through Hallowed Ground National Heritage Area meets this interim criteria.